

COLLEGE EDUCATION OF BENEFIT ONLY TO CERTAIN KINDS OF GIRLS

Many Young Women Happier and More Useful in Other Fields, Advice to Mothers and Fathers

By MRS. WINFIELD SCOTT HOYT.

THIS spring, like many other springs before it, there are numerous *meres de famille* puzzling over a problem that is almost if not quite important enough in their estimation to distract them from that first consideration of the season—the gown daughter shall wear when she graduates in the ballroom of the Plaza from the fashionable “finishing” school where she has learned all she knows of books in an attendance of from four to six years.

In a fashionable sense the word “finishing” is to be written after the reports of this school all have been tabulated, is appropriate for the daughter of her father and in rare cases the mother herself is inclined to consider what she has received from it as being merely a preparation for real education. And so at this season one or other of them brings up the discussion about college.

There are few young girls

Marked by Nature for College

Let us put to one side in our talk about college the girl who has always planned to study there since she was 6 years old. She is the girl who thrives for knowledge and burns for a professional career. As she happens rarely, about as often as a white blackbird, she need not be considered. No matter what her father and mother's opinions are she will override them and have her way. In fact, where there is a pronounced ambition in a youngster parents who are wise yield for the sake of a quiet life.

But the great flock of girls at nineteen have no very strong inclination toward anything except means of a “good time”; they are the “mama” girls, in mother's hands and they will go to college or stay at home, stay where they are “put,” so to speak, and in either place for a few years or until they find themselves they will simply waste time or float volitionally on any current. For these young women parents must decide.

In certain families there is a tradition of college; mother and grandmother both went there, and it is the thing to do. This tradition persists in spite of all the failures colleges have turned out. The mother turns a deaf ear to her older friend who complains that after four years in college her daughter came back to her perfectly “useless,” with every good habit that had been inculcated in her before she went wiped out by these years of being “on her own,” with a reckless determination to live at home precisely as she did in college; that is, with a disconcerting irregularity and worse, with utter lack of sympathy for the little home habits that once gave her pleasure and even joy.

Father Is the One

Who Arbitrarily Decides

Rarely, however, is it the mother who is set on college for her girl, but it is the father who decides arbitrarily that she shall go. That is especially apt to be the case when there is no son in the family to go up to Harvard or Yale to win prizes on the teams as his progenitor did and glid again with metal trophies the family name. This boy being denied him, father determined while his daughter still cooed in the cradle that Emily or Isabelle should do what was possible in her feeble feminine way in college sports. I am acquainted with a New York father, otherwise quite intelligent, who bribed his daughter against her will to enter a woman's college last autumn with no higher aim than to “major” in tennis.

It surely is not necessary to predict that the results in this case of “sending my daughter to college” will not amount to much.

I have begun, and it would seem from the above, as if retained to argue against college for women instead of placidly and open minded considering the advantages and disadvantages to be found there by the young women of our day. Such an attitude of mind would relegate me rightly to the drab ages when women learned by stealth, as they were all and if they were well concealed what they knew. My feeling is, however, that great discrimination ought to be used by parents when they arrive at this crucial period in their daughter's life. They have a multitude of things to consider and the first one is what I ask of parents is the hardest thing they can be asked to do: it is to do some real thinking on the subject.

Have the parents of the 150,000 women students that are now in American colleges, universities and professional schools ever asked themselves whether they were doing the best in their power to fit this great band of girls for proper twentieth century living? Have they in all instances considered the girl or permitted their own ambitions, their own foibles to settle the problem?

Too Much Care Cannot Be

Spent on Early Education

It is the early education in the home and preparatory schools that counts and fits a girl to profit by whatever is to be her next step, whether it be in college to prepare for some professional career such as medicine, law, literature, etc. But before even considering a child's future the first task is to teach concentration and how to study, or else, as many students testify, the first two years in college are wasted, and the average parent, himself and do not realize the importance of finding teachers who know how to instill this only means to a real education, a girl starts her college career thoroughly handicapped, and neither she nor the college is to blame for failure.

What of teachers in primary work learn this art of imparting “how to” to the young child the whole future education becomes a joy, and yet a group of college girls in discussion this subject failed, in looking back over their early training, to recall more than one teacher, and in some in-

stances none, who had ever even touched on this absolute basis of learning.

The next point in which a girl must be thoroughly grounded is in matters of hygiene, which naturally include dietetics or food values. As far as one hears, there is no time in the curriculum for more than, say, six lectures on this subject during the year, and unless a girl has been well grounded on these subjects these are not sufficient to make her conserve her health during the four years away from home. If she has imbibed these principles at home she will not overdo in sports, her diet will be chosen with a view to the scientific values required for her best strength, mentally as well as physically, and if the foods provided are not in quantity and kind what is conducive to this well being

It is the Mother's Place

To Study Her Daughter

A wise mother will not turn her entire attention to the task of finding a husband for her daughter. She should know that this is the girl's career. And if the mother ever knows this she always knows it, and as corollary she knew that college was not meant for her child.

But suppose that a mother has seen in her child capacity, administrative power, ability to concentrate, judgment and at least the beginning of wisdom, then she will do all in her means to give her a chance, believing that she can make a success of her life in lines that once belonged exclusively to men. That wise mother would send her girl to college and never fear that the independence of life there, the freedom from petty discipline, would hurt her. She would close her eyes to some of the defects that come from pulling down the walls of routine, she would close her ears to some of the rebellious words the undisciplined but enthusiastic mind voices, feeling confident that the lesser evils would die away of themselves and the great benefit of her college life would lastingly remain.

College Not for Every Girl,

Marriage Off Is Logical

And so we come back to discrimination. College is not for every girl. It depends on what I wish to make of her, or, rather, what she has already shown is to be her logical calling. How few parents or guardians consider what it is that appeals to the child herself! How few notice that in life a girl begins to form ideals and dream of what she is going to be when she grows up. Yet it is this early ideal, this dream which, permitted to come to fruition, might assure her a complete success, and thwarted or suppressed by parents who want their child to take a preconceived form, they cannot fail to cause her much unnecessary suffering.

What right, after all, has a parent to take this arbitrary stand, that a daughter is either to go to college or not to go as his pleasure dictates?

The average father-to-day announces that of course his girls are going to college, and all the preparations are made in the family with this end in view. The masculine mind has grasped the fact that the narrowness of living in the sheltered seclusion of the home must be counteracted by the experience of living for a time in a group joined by common interests, but bound by no special relationship, and if a girl has the fortune to be an only child or to have more money than the other girls her father possesses the invaluable lesson taught by this freemasonry of being one of what might be called a family, where it is a question of give and take, and where even in the question of her very room the girl must draw lots and abide by what she gets.

And so the girls as well as the boys of the family are sent off to college while their parents sit back expecting that at the end of four years they are going to be repaid for all the sacrifices they may have made, by having returned to them paragons of perfection.

A college is not a species of mill through which is ground and turned out a human being in whom has been trained or hereditarily. In the first place, should that particular child have gone to college who wanted to play the violin? No, she has been retarded exactly from four to six years in her work, and comes out of college discouraged and unfit for a social career, or in fact for any other career, having lost the most important years for acquiring a technique, which are aided by the vigor and endurance of early youth. The girl who is gifted in this way should be blessed with wise parents who have the mental elasticity not to follow the prescribed rules for education, but to plan hours and type of study that will fit in with the necessary time to devote each day to that particular art in which she is destined to excel.

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to supply this deficiency by providing herself with wholesome foods instead of attempting to derive nourishment from cakes and sweets, which, except in the case of a morbid appetite, usually denotes a need for more nutrient in the general diet.

It may seem far afield to touch on this subject, and yet if we are to send our daughter to college we wish to feel that the practical side is to lie in abeyance for four years, for it does not matter what her walk in life is to be, she will need a grounding in these “homely” arts.

In talking over the above with some colleagues it must be acknowledged that they were a very happy, charming group of very intelligent girls, who loved their alma mater and agreed in their breezy way “that our parents have kept us kids just so much longer than our friends, but then when we go out into the world we are going to do great things to make up.”

Disappointment Is Mutual at

Home After Four Years' Absence

And when they do go home does not a disappointment await them also? The home, unless the fathers and mothers are unusually wide in their outlook on life, seems very limited

after the freedom of college life, and the girl frets under too tight a rein, or the inactivity required in living in the average home. And so, while the parent is grieved over a lack of graciousness and the pretty things in her daughter's character, that daughter too is bitterly disappointed because that parent is not farseeing enough to allow her just one year to try her theories, to have her fling. And after all, “that fling” is really very idealistic and fine, be it said in justice to the broad side of a college education, but suppress and thwart it, and the unwise elders have forced “that fling” into something that is very unlovely sometimes and then they blame the college.

To make our daughters' career in college a success therefore depends entirely upon the wise cooperation of the parents and of the teachers through all the grades of preparatory school and finally of the college faculty. The latter will appreciate that the criticism is not unkindly meant, but more of a constructive nature when the suggestion is made that the curriculum should embrace more of domestic science and hygiene, and that gracious acts of social intercourse and good form should be their place beside the “book learning” our girls acquire.

Julia B. Perry Believes Her

System of Reforming, Not

Punishing, Is Justified.

PRISONERS ‘MAKE GOOD’

Plan of Discipline Is Elimination

of Evil Thought Rather

Than by Arbitrary Rule.

But if those who work with the inmates have not caught the vision they will be like the unskilled artist—they will mar and blur the block upon which they work and the image they desire to bring out will forever lie hidden there.

Fear Is Never Employed as

An Agency of Reform

Fear cannot be employed as an agency of reform—such a deterrent power as fear is founded on fallacy. Whatever method of discipline may be employed it should be of such a character as to cure—not merely prevent.

The inward disposition must be changed, so that the offender's desires may be virtuous—not vicious. The attitude of the individual should be that she wants to render service for what she receives instead of getting something for nothing.

Punishment, if you call it such, should never be different in character in an institution from what it is in the home. If it be curative in its character and effect, it will apply to the child in the home, the pupil in the schoolroom, or a criminal in the State.

The one who studies others should study himself. We are all the product of the schools we attend; the books we read; the companions and friends we mingle with. Unfortunately girls and women have drifted in the current in which their lives have been set. Had they been wisely directed they would more than likely lead lives of decency and right.

So many young people load their boat of life with unnecessary things, while all the time they are out of breath for a good time. Happiness never comes that way. They fail to find what they want and restlessness follows. The home fails to satisfy the longings; the school is tiresome and the foundation work for life's work is greatly impaired.

Expeditious Have Taught the

Lesson of Resourcefulness

I have referred to the splendid location of the farm, and we feel glad to have had the experience of living in the very simple way we have. Our temporary buildings have meant a revolt to us, and our meager equipment has meant more. It has taught us all resourcefulness—a great lesson to be learned. As our girls go out to the larger life outside they will never have less, and if they have more they will know how to use it in an economic way, and most agreeable way. Contractors with about forty men are busy right now constructing splendid buildings and planning our heating plant. We would not know they were here were it not for the work they do and the splendid appetite they have.

Our grounds have been laid out by landscape artists from the university; the new buildings will be at least seventy-five feet apart and oriented to obtain a large amount of sunlight.

Bigger and Better Plans on

Foot to Aid the Work

Each building is so planned at a different angle, thus presenting pleasing pictures as one enters the grounds. Our old buildings will be torn down as soon as room is available in the new ones. With better facilities we will have more time to plan bigger things for the ones who come to us, but I am sure, with all the handicaps we have had much good has been accomplished and many have been helped to find their better self.

As we work with the women of the farm and watch their happy faces as they telegraph their responsiveness to the speaker, as we listen to them singing hymns of praise, not only with their lips, but also with heart melody; as we hear them giving accurately and concisely underlying truths found in their Bible study, it is evidence enough to convince the most skeptical that God's Word, even in these troublous times, does not return void, but continues to accomplish its divine purpose.

Human Touch in Every Case

Is the Reforming Agency

If you have not yet guessed what reforming agency is employed, I will answer:

It is the human touch, the helping hand, the sacrificing spirit that lifts one from lower levels to higher ideas of living. It is the vision caught—by the one who works with the one who is down and out; being able at the same time to measure carefully the possibilities of the one worked with—it is the inspiration that you are able to give the one who needs help—that arouses the seared conscience—to right thinking and right doing. The individual worked with must be brought to see that she plays an important part in her own reformation. When you bring her to see and know this—the hardest part of the work is done in saving the girl.

The reformation of people is largely hindered because of the fact that those who work with them—do not visualize properly. Their vision does not take hold in the old fashioned way with the common wash tub and scrub board. We have no electric irons,

premium and still they came—and are still coming even from neighboring States and turning themselves in or going to health officers and asking to be sent.

I scarcely know how we covered the situation, but we did and we certainly verified the truth of “where there is a will there is a way.” Government doctors and Red Cross nurses were in evidence in those times—but now they are gone and we wonder if they ever think back to those times. But the work still goes on efficiently.

Temporary Buildings Being

Supplanted by Permanent Homes

As yet our buildings are only temporary in their structure. Our doors and windows are open day and night. The occupants of one room have nothing to do with the occupants of the room next to them. Throughout the whole institution both in department and housing of inmates there is the most careful classification. Sentenced women are in buildings to themselves and have no association with the inmates girls and women. Our classification goes by groups, hence only the members of that particular group mingle in work or recreation, and the most healthful atmosphere exists. In general assembly meetings the captains of the different groups act as supervisors for the occasion under the leadership of the various matrons.

The site of the Industrial Farm for Women is on high ground commanding broad views. It is probably the finest institutional site in the State and is conspicuous from a distance. It is located on a 140-acre tract, has one and a half miles east of Lansing.

The population to-day is 140 inmates, 12 matrons, 1 physician, 2 nurses, 1 record clerk, 1 chief clerk, 1 steward and 2 chaplains—one